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ART OF GIVING

Quarterly Magazine

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MOTHER

is the first teacher
of Every Child

MY MOTHER, MY TEACHER

#ThankyouTeacher





The first guru in our lives is often our **Mother**, who imparts invaluable wisdom and guidance .

My first teacher, is **my mother, my hero"**.

– **Achyuta Samanta**
Founder, Art of Giving,
KIIT & KISS

SNIPPETS

Page
06

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Page
08

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Page
11

And in the path of soulful service, one should not chase 'Medals' – that is, fame, power, recognition, but rather become a 'Model' – an epitome of selfless service. See how Prof. Achyuta Samanta, in spite of the struggles of his personal life, in spite of the tragedies in his childhood, has succeeded in dedicating his life to this selfless service, without breaking down in the face of challenges.

Page
13

I aspire to be like you—knowledgeable and approachable, thinking with both my heart and my mind, gently encouraging to do my best, with empathy and insight. I want to be like you—giving your time, effort, and ability to make sure that each of us has the best future

Page
15

I am inspired by our Hon'ble Founder Prof. Achyuta Samanta, who is a great teacher himself & for being a beacon of hope & positivity for thousands around the world. His unique concept of "Art of Giving" is all about creating an unconditional and sustainable abundance of love, peace happiness and contentment for others through gestures of kindness & generosity.

Page
16

More than a teacher, he became a mentor who went beyond the realm of sheer music. During lunch breaks, he ate with us, sharing anecdotes and life lessons, imparting invaluable wisdom equally about music and life.

Page
18

Within the boundless depths of knowledge intertwined with the ethereal essence of inspiration, a remarkable group of teachers emerges, brimming with a mystical aura. These incredible personalities, through their unique blend of wisdom, passion, and kindness, are capable of transcending the ordinary and becoming guiding lights in our journey of learning.

Page
20

In the Ramayana also we find glimpses of Teacher & student relationship when Lord Rama spent his tutelage years with his Guru, Sage Vasistha from whom he learnt the nuances of the scriptures & martial arts to prepare him for his princely duties & fought many wars to free the world of demons.

Page
22

Teaching, for me, has always been about fostering change, about not accepting the status quo, and about instilling a sense of patience and resilience. My journey as a teacher has been a testament to the profound impact educators have, not just on the minds they shape but also on the society they help build.

Page
24

In a compassionate humanitarian gesture, the KIIT Deemed to be University has extended employment opportunities and provided free education to the family members of the deceased individuals in the Bahanaga train tragedy hailing from Odisha.

CONTENT

Pg. No.	Topics
01	Celebrating 12 Visionaries Who Are Reshaping Education in India
04	MY UNSUNG MENTORS by Prof. Shalina Mehta
07	Reminiscing My Teachers by Prof. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, Art of Giving, KIIT & KISS
09	Spiritual Talk by His Holiness Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati ji on His Visit to KISS Campus
13	How delightful are these words who exhibits these roles in one's life. by Ananya Swain
15	Special Thanks to MY TEACHERS by Rituparna Mishra
16	Thank you, Teacher by Ritika Sharma
18	The Enlightening Essence: My Mystical Guide Subhashree Rout
20	Teacher and Student Relationship in Indian Mythology by Dr. Chinmaya Kumar Das
22	Innate Teacher in Me by Dr. Nikita Ahya
24	KIIT Provides Jobs, Education to Bahanaga Train Tragedy Affected Families from Odisha
25	Panorama



Founded in 2013
by **Prof. Achyuta Samanta,**

Art of Giving is a humanitarian movement engaged in spreading peace and happiness.



From The Editor's Desk



Amidst the glorious & landmark celebration of the 10th Anniversary of "International Day of Art of Giving" with the theme, "Helping the Help" that has caught the imagination of the people from varied walks of life, the Art of Giving Community have just completed celebrating Teachers' Day as we do every year on September 5th, the birth anniversary of our late President of India, Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, who was a great teacher.

We all know that Art of Giving is all about creating an unconditional and sustainable abundance of love, peace, happiness & contentment for others through gestures of kindness and generosity with no expectation. The teaching community continues to be the ideal of society. The mentoring & handholding of teachers play a crucial & decisive role in the life & career of the students. No country & society can develop in true sense without giving due regard & recognition to the teachers. Even when we grow old in life, memories of the time that we spent with our teachers remain fresh in our hearts. It may so happen that we may have forgotten many. But the ones who made a distinct impact on our lives will remain with us till the last breath as valued treasures. The most important thing about teachers is that they handhold their wards without any expectation of return. Hence the teaching profession perfectly sync with the

basic premise of "Art of Giving".

Teachers are not just in the classrooms. Our parents & grandparents are our first teachers who made us recognize this world, & tread the right path to become responsible, empathetic & good persons. Even nature, books & experiences teach us. Hence we decided to express our gratitude to our teachers under the "Art of Giving" campaign by saying, "Thank you Teacher".

The current Quarterly November-2023 issue of the ART OF GIVING MAGAZINE is based on the theme, "Thank you Teacher". We have tried to incorporate some of the innermost feelings of our students & also professors portraying the regards & gratitude for their mentors. The issue also features the glimpses of the celebration under the theme in a most vibrant manner.

As a Founder, I sincerely believe that the current November issue is a unique way of our expressing our gratitude to these most important people in our lives without whose support we might not have reached the place where we all are today.

(Achyuta Samanta)
Founder, Art of Giving, KIIT & KISS

Celebrating 12 Visionaries

Who Are Reshaping Education in India

Celebrating the unsung heroes of Indian education, we look at ten extraordinary educators who have redefined teaching and learning in various parts of the country. These individuals have not just imparted academic knowledge but have also instilled hope, resilience, and a passion for lifelong learning among their students. Their contributions extend far beyond the conventional classroom, making lasting impacts on communities and the nation.

01

**Anand Kumar**

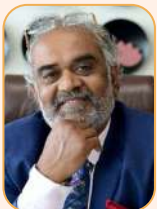
Anand Kumar, the founder of Super 30, is renowned for his groundbreaking work in mentoring economically disadvantaged students for IIT-JEE, India's highly competitive engineering entrance exam. Operating from Patna, Bihar, Kumar provides free coaching, food, and lodging to 30 selected students each year. His efforts have helped many students from humble backgrounds secure places in prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology, transforming their lives and future prospects.

02

**Rajesh Kumar Sharma**

In the shadows of a metro bridge in Delhi, Rajesh Kumar Sharma runs a unique school for children from nearby slums. This school, set under the bridge, provides free education to children who cannot afford formal schooling. Sharma's commitment to teaching these children basic literacy and math skills demonstrates his belief in education's power to uplift the most marginalized sections of society.

03

**Savji Dholakia**

A diamond merchant by profession, Savji Dholakia stands out for his unconventional approach to teaching life skills. He sends young adults, including his employees' children, to rural areas with minimal resources to survive and learn life lessons. This survival exercise aims to teach resilience, resourcefulness, and empathy, skills that Dholakia believes are crucial in today's world.

04

**Arvind Gupta**

An IIT Kanpur alumnus, Arvind Gupta has dedicated his life to making science accessible and fun for children. His innovative approach involves creating simple toys from trash to explain scientific concepts. Gupta's work, particularly in rural and underprivileged regions, has brought the joy of learning and innovation to countless children.

05

**Babar Ali**

Babar Ali started teaching at the young age of nine in his backyard in Murshidabad, West Bengal. He was named the 'Youngest Headmaster in the World' by BBC for his efforts in setting up an informal school for underprivileged children. His afternoon school is a beacon of hope for many children in his village, offering them a chance to learn and dream.

06

**Ajeet Singh**

In Varanasi, Ajeet Singh has dedicated his life to rescuing and educating children of sex workers. His organization, Guria, goes beyond traditional education by providing emotional support, legal aid, and a path to a dignified life, striving to break the cycle of poverty and exploitation in one of India's oldest cities.

07

**Roshni Mukherjee**

The founder of Exam Fear Education, Roshni Mukherjee, has utilized digital platforms to provide free educational content to students across India. Especially crucial during the pandemic, her online resources cover a wide range of subjects for grades 6 to 12, democratizing access to quality education.

08

**Aditya Kumar**

Known as 'Cycle Guruji', Aditya Kumar travels across Uttar Pradesh on his bicycle, offering free education to underprivileged children. He carries books and educational materials on his bike, reaching out to children in remote areas. His mobile classroom approach addresses the lack of access to schools in rural regions.

09

**Sandeep Desai**

A former Marine Engineer and a professor, Sandeep Desai is famous for his unique approach to fundraising for education. He is often seen in Mumbai's local trains, asking for donations to fund schools he has built in rural Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu. His commitment to providing education to rural children showcases his passion for making a difference through grassroots efforts.

10

**Sonam Wangchuk**

Sonam Wangchuk has revolutionized education in Ladakh through his Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL). His approach integrates practical, environment-friendly methods with local culture. Wangchuk is also celebrated for his eco-innovations like the Ice Stupa, addressing water scarcity in arid regions.

11



**Sugata
Mitra**

Dr. Sugata Mitra is renowned for his 'Hole in the Wall' experiment, which demonstrated that children could learn complex subjects independently using the internet and computers. This experiment has had a significant influence on educational methodologies, advocating for minimal intervention in children's learning processes.

12



**Ajay Bahadur
Singh**

Ajay Bahadur Singh's 'Zindagi' program in Odisha provides free coaching for underprivileged students aspiring to clear the NEET exam for medical studies, transforming the lives of many students and their communities.



”

The true teachers are those who help us think for ourselves.

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan



Great teachers empathize with kids, respect them, and believe that each one has something special that can be built upon. ☺☺

—Ann Lieberman

MY UNSUNG MENTORS

Prof. Shalina Mehta

She had a divine persona clad in a human body. If my memory has withstood testimony of time, I saw her for the first time nearly sixty years ago. She was my middle school headmistress. Everyone addressed her as Ms. Sen. Draped in a starched cotton saree, her smiling figure epitomized discipline and commanded silence and respect from five to fifteen years old. Lesson she imparted to me, guided my journey through life. Whatever I achieved in life is a tribute to her ability to nurture confidence in a visibly disturbed adolescent. The year was 1963 and I had just started learning to construct sentences in English after being introduced to alphabets in class V.

My refugee parents struggling to come to terms with the trauma of partition and meagre resources, had no choice but to educate their seventh child in a Hindi medium school. My father was a successful lawyer in Lahore and had ensured that my elder siblings received their initial education from a British governess there. Partition ruined his practise and uprooted the family from Lahore to Delhi. But value of education for his children remained pivotal for him. My elder brother earned a fellowship to pursue his higher education from a premium university in the United States. He married a beautiful young white American woman there

and returned home with her in 1963. She and my two elder sisters became good friends and would spend hours talking to each other in English. On the cusp of teens, I was desperate to become part of these conversations. I struggled to construct incoherent sentences in a language that I were barely acquainted with. Invariably, my sisters would smile at grammatically incorrect fumble that I conjured to be part of the intimate conversations. Slowly, I lost confidence and became a loner, sitting by myself and crying. Lost in their own world, my siblings were unaware of my state of my mind.

One afternoon, Ms. Sen found me in a corner, sitting by myself and howling away. She held my hand and escorted me to her office; she cuddled me lovingly and made me share the reason for those inconsolable outbursts of emotions. In a choked voice, I narrated my anguish! With a smile on her face, she said “O, my child, you need not cry, come to my office every day during recess and talk to me in English without worrying about grammar and incorrect sentences. Very soon you will learn to speak fluently and speak better English than your sisters”. Her words worked like a magic wand. I recollect spending every recess session for the next six months in her office. My confidence returned and my caring and loving

American sister-in-law sensed my discomfort and started putting me at ease. She encouraged me to read English magazines and in due course in an unassuming manner shaped my future journey.

If Ms. Sen had ignored my state of mind in my growing years, I often wonder where I would have been today! Her humility, wisdom, composure, compassion are invincible qualities that symbolize an ideal teacher. Imbibing and internalizing these require exceptional fortitude.

A year later, I finished my class eight and was shifted to a higher secondary school. After finishing high school, I went back to my old school to thank Mrs. Sen for resurrecting my confidence and moulding my future, but she was not there. I learnt that she retired a year after I left the school and few months back died of cancer. My regret for not being able to thank her for her magnanimity made me cry as I did years ago when she held my hand and escorted me to her office.

Nonetheless, she continues to live with me and remains my inspiration in my journey as a teacher. She taught me to believe in myself. She also gave me basic lessons in becoming a good teacher. Years later as I was drawn into teaching as a professional career, Ms. Sen's benign persona became my constant companion.

I was not able to say thank you to her when she was alive, today I want to acknowledge my gratitude to her through this exceptional public effort of print media.

My other unsung mentor was my research supervisor Prof. J.D. Mehra. He commanded rapt attention from students in the class. His aristocratic demeanour and his unequivocal command on English language and critical pedagogy endeared him to his students. Paradoxically, it also distanced them from what he often described in the class an imagined character called 'phantasmagoria'. Most of us were in awe and often failed to see his humane and gentle persona. He became my philosopher

and guide at a critical juncture in my life.

I joined department of Anthropology Delhi University in 1968, few months after my father's death. Congenial environment and fascinating texts of the subjects and interest in theology and reading literature helped me come to terms with my personal loss. Other interest that kept me glued to the discipline was genetics. I had a personal interest. My elder brother born on 30th August 1947 became epileptic at a young age. Seeing his suffering and reading that it may have genetic linkages, I decided to pursue research in this enigmatic condition after my masters. Specializing in biological anthropology was a natural choice under such circumstances. But as destiny would have it, in 1972 a day before practical examinations for first year of master's were commenced, he died during an epileptic attack.

Next day, I had to take archaeology practical but was in a state of shock, unable to utter a word during Viva-voce examination. My teachers were surprised as I had been a good student for the last four years. Prof. Mehra went out and asked my class fellows what happened to me. They told him about my sudden loss. He returned to the examination hall and asked his co-examiner to continue with the viva of other students. He asked me to come to his room, called office peon and got a glass of water for me. He then asked me to drink it. Scared and confused, I took few sips, he looked at me and started talking about life and death. He shared his own struggle with life after the death of his young wife and allowed me to shed tears, saying it is natural to cry and share grief. After listening to his soul-searching sermons, I tried to gather my emotions and returned to the examination hall to answer few questions on prehistory. That day changed not only my academic moorings as I switched from specializing in genome research to exploring mysteries of mind and human behaviour, specializing in social and cultural anthropology. I went on to do Ph. D under his supervision to explore complexities of religion and conflict. For hours, I sat in his room listening to mystic of

philosophy of religion. He was one of the best orators and narrators that I have ever known in my life. Under his guidance and perceptive and critical vision, I wrote one of the first empirical accounts of Hindu-Muslim relations from an anthropological perspective. One of the readers of the book titled *The Eternal Web* based on this research work was described as a "yeoman's service to humanity." This small book received excellent reviews from Mulk Raj Annand and Badruddin Tyabji. I owe forty years of my journey in anthropology to my unsung Guru and his teachings.

But before I put my pen to rest, I must admit my own debacle, I dedicated my first book to him but did not have the courage to give a copy to him personally. He mentioned this to another professor, and he spoke to me about it. My reason

for not going personally to give a copy to my mentor was unethical conduct of the publishers. Manuscript was published without signing of the contract. The published book was replete with typographical errors. I knew, he would instantly draw my attention to it and would say this is not expected of you. Many years later, I decided to amend my conduct but alas it was too late! He was in the fading years of his life and had become a recluse. He refused to meet anyone, and I was never able to express my immense personal gratitude to him. He excelled in the art of giving through his teachings and empowered many to share it with others. I was one of the few lucky ones to get his blessings. My Naman to my unsung Gurus and their lasting lessons.

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः । गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरवे नमः ॥





Reminiscing My Teachers

Prof. Achyuta Samanta

Founder, Art of Giving, KIIT & KISS

It may sound like any other annual celebration for namesake and may have started losing its relevance. But it is a very significant day for all teachers and students. It is a day very close to my heart for the reason – my life changed because of a teacher and continued guidance from my teachers, lecturers and professors and also because I started my career as a teacher.

Teachers shape the lives of the students. They build societies of responsible, empathetic and humane citizens. A child learns his first lessons from home, with the mother being the first teacher. But the most important life lessons are learnt from his/her teacher. If one finds a good mentor as a teacher and gets right guidance he can, definitely prosper in life. Teachers are the strong roots that keep you grounded and still enable you to build castles. Humanity would not have prospered, had it not been for the influential & enabling role of philosophers, teachers and guides. They mentor you to face any struggle and not to give up, despite facing Himalayan hurdles themselves.

Teaching is a beautiful profession. It shapes the future of a nation. There are teachers by passion who change the whole world and there are

teachers by chance, who choose to take up the profession as a last resort. Whatever it is, by choice or by chance, teachers are to be revered for the knowledge they possess, the direction they give and handholding they do. The country that gives due credit to its teachers flourishes.

I still remember that day in Kalarabanka that changed my life as it gave me an opportunity to study. Once when I was playing with my friends in a school playground, making noise and whiling away my time while my friends, a school teacher came out shouting and running towards us.

“Stop now. I am going to teach you a lesson”, he said. By the time he came out of the room, all my friends had run away. I being a shy boy was caught by him. He took me inside the classroom. He asked what I do and why was I not in the class during school hours, I told him I don't study. He is the one who asked me if I wanted to study.

“I don't have slate and chalk”; I replied.

That day, the innocence of a child who wanted to learn appealed to Shri Nrusingha Nayak, the headmaster of the school.

He enrolled me to his school and gave me materials to study. When I told this to Maa, she

was happy and asked me to study well and perform. As I was born in the midst of extreme poverty and the challenges for survival were daunting, I had been deprived of the need of a proper name. It was he who christened me as 'Achyuta', the name the whole world knows me with today. He changed the course of my life by enrolling me in his school in grade one at the age of five and selflessly supporting my education. I shall never be able to pay back for all that he did except my deepest gratitude and obeisance. Today, when I look back, I feel contented that I have been able to live by his ideals and have dedicated my life in the service of the society.

On a lighter note, while writing this, I remember another unshared page of my life. Though I am very handsome and charming, my handwriting is almost illegible. I could not afford to buy a handwriting practice workbook. Students of my class used to practise on these books, so their handwriting improved. My teacher could notice it and would tear few pages from workbooks of my friends to help me practice. But it did not change my handwriting. The point of sharing this story is that the teacher knows who are weak and always

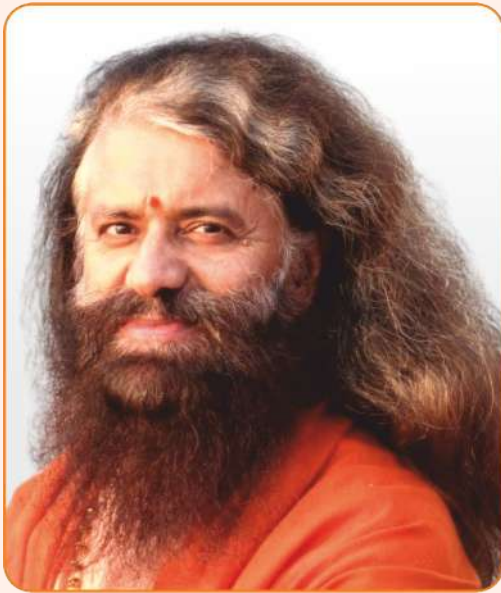
want to handhold and protect them, even if they have to extend special favors.

I have been a blue eyed boy of my teachers and always proved my leadership as a monitor of the class. I respected them and they loved me. Some teachers like Dr. Kusha Nanda, Nrushinga Nayak, and Prof. RK Nanda have left an imprint in my heart. I am also very close to all who are still alive and leave no opportunity to express my gratitude to them. At KIIT & KISS also, we have started tutor mentor system, understanding the importance of a mentor.

Teaching as a profession has undergone a massive change with availability of all kinds of information with the children via the internet. Teachers have also become friendlier, just like a colleague with the students with the changing times. But the respect for the profession and teachers remain evergreen. I thank the teaching community that enables us with the right inputs to become better human beings.



**A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination,
and instill a love of learning. – Brad Henry**



Spiritual Talk by

His Holiness

Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati ji on His Visit to KISS Campus



Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati-ji, President & Spiritual Head, Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, visited the KISS Campus on 24th November, 2023, and blessed the holy ground of KISS Temple by his gracious presence. To commemorate the event, a programme for public interaction with Pujya Swami-ji was organized at KISS Campus, honouring the auspicious occasion.

Today, I will begin my talk by reflecting on the idea of 'peace'. In the current world scenario, it is 'peace' which is perhaps the most urgent need. 'Peace' must prevail over war, and war has to come to an end. India is not a mere 'piece of land', but a 'land of peace'. This message of 'peace' has been given to us for centuries by Indian sages from all epochs. But it is this sacred land of Kalinga which stands, in history, as the place that has showed the world the true way to embrace 'peace'. Let us remember the well-known story of Emperor Ashoka and the transformation that he underwent as his eyes fell on the blood-red colour of the river - Dayanadi (the River of Compassion), post the violence and bloodshed of the Kalinga war. That was the historic metamorphosis of the holy city of Kalinga; it changed from being a 'land of war' to a 'land of pyaar' (land of love) and a 'land of sanskaar' (land of culture).

The tour around the campuses of KISS and KIIT has made me feel that it is through human

agency only that God's work takes shape on this earth. I would address the honourable founder of KIIT and KISS not as Prof. Samanta but as Saint Samanta. It is Prof. Achyuta Samanta's utmost humility, nobility, and selflessness that he does not claim credit for such awe-inspiring ventures as KIIT and KISS, but describes them as divine interventions; as if it is through Prof. Samanta's hands that God has executed His own designs and laid out His plans. Inspired by the signposts 'I love KISS' all around the campus, I want to say that 'I too love KISS'. It is our work that bears our true identity, therefore, I express my wholehearted support for KISS and the noble, selfless service that it is doing to all the tribal children that it has extended shelter to. It is very interesting to see how these thousands of children obediently listen to the words of Saint Samanta (the honourable founder, Prof. Achyuta Samanta) as they would listen to their own parents. This is nothing less than a miracle, and it is possible only because, here, the language they hear is one of love, kindness, and compassion. It is

a campus where love, kindness, compassion, tradition, and culture flow like a river, just as it does in the river, Dayanadi. I want to emphasize that it is the devotion and dedication of the honourable founder and his selflessness that have been the foundation of these immense ventures – KISS and KIIT, which have drawn people from as far as Kashmir. I would say that Prof. Samanta is God Vishwakarma, reincarnated in human form, to execute these monumental tasks for the welfare of common people. I also want to point out another important thing – a task, besides being big, also needs to be beautiful by its very quality, and that is the essence of these campuses. Prayer or puja does not only take place in temples, they also happen in places like these, which are as sacred as temples by the virtue of their own nobility.

Sometimes I remember my childhood days. As a child, I used to sit quietly listening to saints, sages and fakirs. There was something in spiritualism that touched me deeply and struck a chord in my heart. Back then, it was not the time of 'internet', but one of 'inner net' by the virtue of which I could connect with my soul, my inner being. It was then that I realized how important is work-ethic in human life. It is by one's work that one is known and is remembered by the world. I also want to emphasize on another crucial aspect – to do work without being greedy for fame, name and recognition. In life, we should do work as if we are no more than instruments in the hands of God, because human life is nothing but an expression of God's will.

It is only when we work with such a sense of selfless service that we actually attain God. Prayer is nothing but service, 'puja' is nothing but selflessly dedicating oneself for the welfare of the society. For instance, during the Covid times when people were disowned even by their own

families and friends, they were embraced by the love and care of Prof. Samanta's saintly heart. KISS houses 40,000 tribal children, 70% of them being girls, and this incredibly huge task seems no less than a miracle or magic. Dr. Abdul Kalam once said that this world is an amazing place. There is always a magician behind a magic, and that, in this case, is the Founder of KISS and KIIT, Prof. Samanta. In the temple, the idol of Jagannath may not have hands, but, through Prof. Samanta, Lord Jagannath makes His hands visible – it is through him that the tasks of such divine nature get executed. And then such tasks become synonymous with other tasks, like service towards one's nation, one's country or service for one's God. It is through serving people only that one serves God.

I would say that Prof. Samanta is God Vishwakarma, reincarnated in human form, to execute these monumental tasks for the welfare of common people.



For students of KISS and KIIT, there is no need to go to foreign universities like MIT or Harvard, because this institution may not be Harvard, but it is most certainly a supreme model of 'Hard Work'.

One should have the motto of 'serving' in life, just like Hanuman ji and Shavari had for Lord Ram. Remember how Shavari used to sweep clean the path with a broom, never expecting a return for her honest labour. And in the path of soulful service, one should not chase 'Medals' – that is, fame, power, recognition, but rather become a 'Model' – an epitome of selfless service. See how Prof. Samanta, in spite of the struggles of his personal life, in spite of the tragedies in his childhood, has succeeded in dedicating his life to this selfless service, without breaking down in the face of challenges.

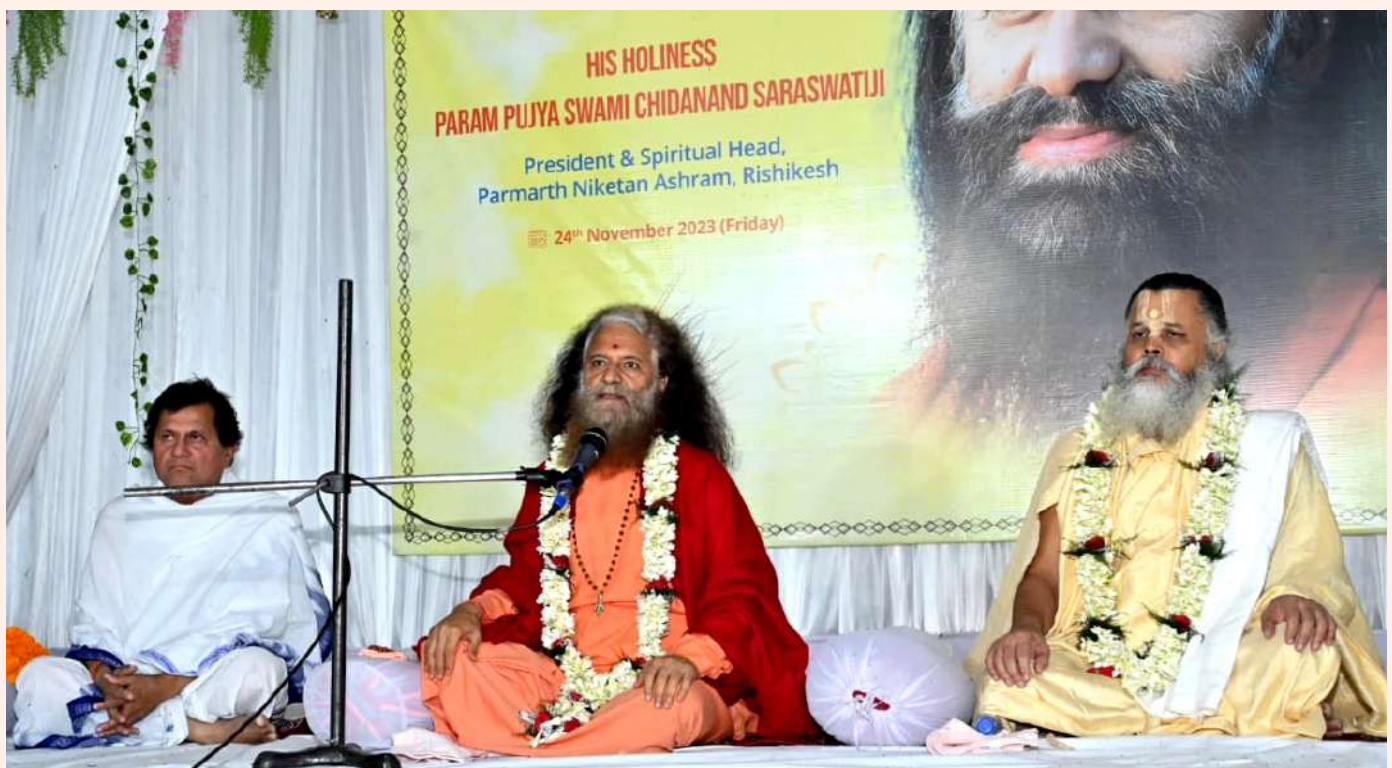
In this world, one may earn by one hand, but, while giving, one must use thousand hands, then only it becomes essentially an 'Art of Giving'. I will

show you the ultimate model of honest labour and selfless work – that is Prof. Samanta himself. As I see him, I remember all the legendary stories of devotion, like that of Shavari and Hanuman-ji. It is not necessary to search for God in temples or in the wilderness of the forests, but it is the heart of human beings that God actually resides in.

It is with such noble ventures like KISS that we should engage wholeheartedly – through investing our mind, our talent, our technology, our money and our resources. Campuses, such as KISS, should be debt-free as its noble intentions are already 'doubt-free'. Doubtlessly, it was a noble intention that lay the foundation of the institution. I openly invite people to participate enthusiastically in this noble mission, whose name is KISS. This is a place where one can find God because this is a ground which has been sanctified by the divine blessings of God Himself, our Lord Jagannath.

And in the path of soulful service, one should not chase 'Medals' – that is, fame, power, recognition, but rather become a 'Model' – an epitome of selfless service. See how Prof. Samanta, in spite of the struggles of his personal life, in spite of the tragedies in his childhood, has succeeded in dedicating his life to this selfless service, without breaking down in the face of challenges.

On the request made by Prof. Samanta, I will share a few insights into my blessed life and my spiritual journey. I will begin by talking about a miraculous experience that happened in my family when I was seven years old. During one of the days when my family was celebrating my uncle's promotion and his new posting in the hill-station of Shimla, once it happened so that we went to see my uncle off at the station. Due to an





unfortunate turn of events, my mother slipped and fell on the railway track while getting down the train. As the train had already started moving, people at the spot felt that the accident would prove to be fatal. However, to the pleasant surprise of everyone present there, my mother was not only alive but untouched by even the slightest harm. I still recall how my parents read this miraculous escape of my mother, from the clutches of sure death, as a divine sign. They began a new life here onward. My mother started doing meditation often for hours at a stretch. As a child, I was influenced by the sight of my mother meditating in yoga posture in one quiet corner of the house. Such an environment at home completely transformed my life.

One day, a saint visited our house and touched my forehead. That was for me an epiphanic moment of enlightenment. I was as if transported to another world. Thought of renouncing worldly life and becoming a saint dawned in my child-mind. However, it was not an easy task. I was

asked to follow an extremely strict and regimented schedule of diet and seclusion. It was through that rigorous routine of restricted diet, absolute seclusion and day-long meditation that I got prepared for a real saint's life. It was my Guru-ji who showed me the correct path to saintliness, in which I discovered gradually the power bestowed by meditation or 'yog'. It was not food or drink or milk which provided me with the nourishment and energy on my journey to becoming a saint, but it was the power of meditation that became the real source of my inner strength.

I would conclude by saying that it is only through renouncing material attractions and greed that one discovers infinite joy and happiness in life. Prof. Achyuta Samanta, in whom I see Saint Samanta, is such an emblem of pure joy and happiness, and that is because his life is truly a living example of sacrifice – the art of selfless giving.



It was not food or drink or milk which provided me with the nourishment and energy on my journey to becoming a saint, but it was the power of meditation that became the real source of my inner strength.





Educators, pedagogue, instructors,
tutors, coach!!!! What not!

How delightful are these
words who exhibits these
roles in one's life.

Ananya Swain

Unwavering support, guidance and excellent dedication provide glimpses of greatest teachers. Teachers are unsung heroes. Everyone recalls that one teacher who had a profound influence on their life, whether they offered you a shoulder to cry on, helped you get through a challenging year, or helped you discover your passion. Rarely does someone have the opportunity to positively impact someone's life for the rest of their life the way a teacher can, by instilling optimism and confidence, imparting knowledge that leads to success, and serving as a great role model, as you have, are, and always will.

When I go back to my memory lane, a decade ago, I am amazed at how my teacher transformed a naughty girl with many imperfections and weaknesses into a disciplined, punctual, and compassionate person. Today I realize that the values that he installed in me like giving back to the society is a true gift from my mentor.

Thank you Mr. Pradeep Mohanty Sir,
School was never an exciting place for me. College life would have been worse if I would have not met you. You held my hand and have

taken me so far, made me a confident person with so much goodness within me. Expressing "Thank you" is such a small word to recognize your contribution towards me. Early in my profession, I developed the relentless desire to contribute everything I had. I went from being a stubborn, negligent, and average student to having a magical transformation. I will never forget your words that have echoed my ears whenever I wanted to quit things "God sees the truth, but waits. Wait for your time to come". From an ordinary student to an extra-ordinary dreamer, the pathway was shown by you. I appreciate you being my life's example. I want to be like you when I think back on everything you've taught me and contemplate the kind of person you are—smart, captivating, and upbeat while being humble.

I aspire to be like you—knowledgeable and approachable, thinking with both my heart and my mind, gently encouraging to do my best, with empathy and insight. I want to be like you—giving your time, effort, and ability to make sure that each of us has the best future. I want to be like you because you gave me something to strive for! I was trapped in the darkness until you liberated me and showed me the light of knowledge. You

brought light of dawn into my life. The fact that I'm thanking you is only a small step towards truly appreciating your gift, which I will treasure and cultivate always. Without losing any opportunity, I would "Thank You" for all contributions you made in my life. The plethora of experiences under your tutelage uncovered the larger picture of life for me. A simple work that I can do is that in a blink of an eye, I would be only grateful to you and towards your transforming contribution to my life. To me, you are an embodiment of God because of how elegant you have always been. Owe you an eternal debt of gratitude.

Lastly, I am thankful for the greenery in my life, I am thankful for the sprinkle of blessings on me, I am thankful for making me understand the seasons of knowledge, I am thankful for your transformative guidance.

You are a blessing to me; maybe I have not lived up to your expectations. All I can say that one day I am going to make you proud. You have shown

me the way where I can proudly stand and realize my deeds in a positive way. You are the best gift from the Lord to me whom I would never forget until my last breath. No dictionary encompasses the right words to thank you as emotions cannot be expressed in words. You have shown me stars when I was lost in the shadows.

Thank you for the "Art of teaching" that you have and you passed on as a legacy of blessing to me. Today the institution where I have enrolled as a Research scholar is founded & mentored by the most inspirational personality from whom I have gained knowledge of being modest and humble. He has the vision for spreading love, teaching empowerment, involvement in spiritualism and sustainability. I express my indebtedness & gratitude to him for cherishing the high values in life. The person is none other than Prof Achyuta Samanta, founder of KIIT and KISS, Bhubaneswar.



A master can tell you what he expects of you. A teacher, though, awakens your own expectations. – Patricia Neal



Special Thanks to **MY TEACHERS**

Rituparna Mishra

In a world brimming with chaos and constant change, there is one steadfast presence that remains unyielding, like an anchor in life's uncertainties. It is the lessons learnt in life. With wisdom and patience, these lessons shape young minds, bestowing upon them the precious gift of knowledge and wisdom. I am so grateful for my teachers as I reflect on the many things I have learnt and the progress I have experienced.

In the quiet halls of our thoughts, our teachers' voices remind us of the crucial lessons imparted. Each day, they arrive in the classroom, not just as educators, but as lighthouses beckoning the entrance to the practical life: their words of inspiration resonate with our aspiration, fear, and tenacity. They pour their hearts and souls into teaching their students inquiry and ambition. Their commitment goes beyond textbooks and into our souls.

One such exceptional teacher in my life has been Mrs. Tripathy, my English teacher from high school. Her love for literature was infectious. She introduced me to the world of words, sparking a lifelong love for reading and writing. Her constant but caring encouragement helped me develop my voice and blend it with words to write spellbinding stories with telling expressions. My gratitude to Mrs. Tripathy for teaching me to create magic with words is immense.

Another exceptional teacher to whom I am very thankful is Mr. Jyotishi, my computer science teacher, for his amazing teaching style, which transported me back in time. He made every element of code and programming language look like a unique mathematical approach to truth and reality. I may be accused of sounding too baffling to some readers for my presuming that a literature aficionado like me is so absorbed in concrete data. But believe me, his skill brought the code to life for me like a literary statement coming to aesthetic illumination.

I realize that I could never adequately thank everyone who has shaped me into who I am today. However, I will always hold them in the highest of my regards.

Lastly I am inspired by our Hon'ble Founder Prof. Achyuta Samanta, who is a great teacher himself & for being a beacon of hope & positivity for thousands around the world. His unique concept of "Art of Giving" which is all about creating an unconditional and sustainable abundance of love, peace, happiness and contentment for others through gestures of kindness & generosity. I feel humbled in being associated with the great Institution built by him & thank him from the bottom of my heart for inculcating in me the right values of life.



Thank You, Teacher

Ritika Sharma

This year, in my first year at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (Deemed to be University), I have come to know of a unique philosophy that has enlightened my point of view towards life: The “Art of Giving”, which is an unconditional and sustainable gift of love and happiness, a philosophy preached by our Honorable Founder, Professor Achyuta Samanta Sir. Learning about this philosophy made me realize that I had been blessed by a wonderful gift.

I was in the sixth grade when I stumbled upon an opportunity that not only introduced me to the world of choral music but also gifted me a mentor, guide, and friend – my music teacher, Sudhanshu Sir.

The transition from junior to senior wing in school was a whirlwind of new experiences, amidst which, the school choir stood out to me. I was passionate about music, and the prospect of joining the choir was both exciting and daunting. So, I applied, not fully comprehending the journey that awaited me. The audition process was a revelation. From the nerve-racking initial auditions to the enlightening workshops and finally, the recording for the grand finale, every step was a testament to the dedication that music demanded. As the only sixth-grader among a group of students from classes 9 to 12, sometimes I felt as if I did not belong

there.

In this sea of unfamiliar challenges, Sudhanshu Sir emerged as a beacon of light. With his infectious smile, enthusiasm, and unwavering encouragement, he transformed the choir into a close-knit family. Under his guidance, his passion for music, and his expertise, every practice session became an inspiring and enriching experience (a fun one as well because we got a free pass to miss classes). Every performance became an opportunity to create something beautiful.

More than a teacher, he became a mentor who went beyond the realm of sheer music. During lunch breaks, he ate with us, sharing anecdotes and life lessons, imparting invaluable wisdom equally about music and life. His ability to seamlessly blend learning with fun made every interaction not just educational but also immensely enjoyable. At first, I used to be intimidated by him; eventually I realized that he was an approachable, understanding, and infinitely patient person. He nurtured our talents, guided us through intricate nuances of music, and celebrated our successes, no matter how small. In his presence, I felt cared for.

Under his tutelage, the choir became more than a group of singers. Through countless rehearsals,

performances, and shared laughter, we forged strong friendships. I still scroll through archives of our performances, videos and pictures of us having fun backstage, and feel proud when I see the choir seniors updating their LinkedIn profiles.

In 2017, life led me away from Delhi to the city of Lucknow, following the posting of my father, an officer in the Indian Air Force. That Diwali, in a moment of nostalgia and gratitude, I sent Sir heartfelt Diwali greetings. To my surprise and delight, he promptly replied, expressing his best wishes. He was in Gorakhpur, not too far from Lucknow.

A few days later, Sudhanshu Sir and his family, drove down to our house. His arrival was not just a social visit; it was a reunion of old friends, a celebration of the bond we had shared in Delhi. The air was filled with laughter, stories, and the aroma of homemade snacks. All evening we

reminisced about the choir. His genuine interest in my life in Lucknow, and the same encouragement and pride in my achievements filled me with a profound sense of belonging.

Our meeting in Lucknow became a cherished memory. It was a testament of the impact a teacher's gift of love and guidance has on a student. The visit reaffirmed the profound influence he had on my life, not just as a music teacher but also as a mentor and friend.

I am grateful for the music he brought into my life, and I celebrate the wonderful friendship that continues to inspire me every day. I hope that he knows how profoundly thankful I am for his presence in my life. Thank you, Sir, for being the coolest, most learned, and most loved teacher I could ever have asked for, and having blessed his humble student with your Art of Giving.



**The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains.
The superior teacher demonstrates. The great
teacher inspires. – William Arthur Ward**



The Enlightening Essence: My Mystical Guide

Subhashree Rout

In the realm of generosity and selflessness, there are few individuals who have embodied the true essence of giving, which is a rare and beautiful thing to witness the Art of Giving in action. It is a force so mystical and enchanting that it has the power to transform lives and awaken greatness within us. As I reflect on the profound impact of this art, I am filled with gratitude for those who have shown me its true essence. They have illuminated a path that leads to a deeper understanding of the human spirit and its capacity for compassion. The Art of Giving is not merely an act of charity or generosity; it is a profound expression of empathy and connection. It is a recognition of our shared humanity's threads that bind us all together. When we give, we acknowledge the inherent worth and dignity of every individual, and we affirm our belief in the power of collective action. However, what sets this Art apart is its ability to transcend the material realm. In the spirit of 'The Art of Giving,' our teachers have bestowed upon us the most valuable gift of all, which is education.

They have sparked our thirst for knowledge, taught us to embrace the joy of learning, and equipped us with the skills to cope with the difficulties of life. Just as Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan believed that education was a means to achieve one's greatest potential, our teachers have inspired us to reach

for the stars. His words of wisdom stated that "The true teachers are those who help us think for ourselves" [1]. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam also appreciated the selfless dedication of teachers and stated that, "Teaching is a noble profession that shapes the character, calibre, and future of an individual" [2]. With gratitude to educators everywhere, I honour the legacies of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, whose dedication and brilliance continue to enlighten us. Inspired by their vision, Dr. Achyuta Samanta Sir, the founder of KIIT and KISS Deemed to be Universities, carries their legacy forward, working tirelessly to empower countless lives through education and innovation. His contributions know no bounds, and I will be eternally grateful for his enduring influence on us.

Within the boundless depths of knowledge intertwined with the ethereal essence of inspiration, a remarkable group of teachers emerges, brimming with a mystical aura. These incredible personalities, through their unique blend of wisdom, passion, and kindness, are capable of transcending the ordinary and becoming guiding lights in our journey of learning. Like magicians armed with the wand of wisdom, these teachers possess an inherent understanding of the fragile balance between

imparting knowledge and nurturing the fertile soil of imagination. They effortlessly weave together the threads of knowledge, creating a quilt of understanding that transcends the confines of textbooks and syllabuses. Their classrooms become reservoirs of intellectual exploration, where the boundaries of conventional thinking are shattered and the seeds of innovation are sown. With a mere glance, these extraordinary educators can discern the hidden potential within each student, unlocking the doors to their untapped capabilities.

In the esteemed halls of education, where knowledge is nurtured within curious young minds, there is a teacher whose impact goes beyond the usual. She is the mystic teacher, the enigmatic mentor who possesses a captivating aura, serving as a guide who profoundly influences our inner selves. She is my mentor and the torchbearer in my shadows. She is Professor Swati Samantaray, who resonates with reverence and admiration, assumes the role of my supervisor, illuminating the path ahead. She is not merely an observer of students but rather a visionary who perceives the very essence of their being. She possesses a rare quality that sets her apart: an unshakeable faith in the abilities and talents of her students. She sees beyond the surface, beyond the limitations that society may impose, and instead focuses on the boundless potential that lies within each and every one of them.

The appealing nature of her presence encouraged me to explore deeper, to reflect, and to uncover the profound beauty that lies within each topic of my subject. In a world filled with an

abundance of answers, she graciously encouraged me to explore the realm of questions, which in turn sparked my deep curiosity for knowledge. Her presence is like a radiant star in the night sky, who consistently shone with wisdom, compassion, and profound insight, illuminating the darkest corners of my consciousness. Through her teachings, she has bestowed upon me the invaluable gift of self-awareness, enabling me to navigate the labyrinthine complexities of existence with newfound clarity and purpose. My mystic teacher has consistently provided direction and her inspiration has allowed me to transcend the limitations of the mundane. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to her for being the glitter of knowledge in my life. Her spirituality has profoundly influenced me, and I will always be guided by her influence. Thank you for making me believe in the Art of Giving as a mystical force that can transform lives and awaken greatness within us all.

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"I am indebted to my father for living, but to my teacher for living well. – Alexander the Great



Teacher and Student Relationship in Indian Mythology

Dr. Chinmaya Kumar Das

Our Indian mythology is replete with beautiful stories portraying the unique relationship between the teacher and student. These stories carry the universal message of sacred bonding between the pupil & the teacher. Traditionally the Indian system of life is divided into four Ashramas. i.e Brahmacharya, Grahyastha, Banaprastha & Jati Brata. The First stage of life that is the Brahmacharya is spent at the Gurukul with the teacher who is the mentor & the guide. This phase of life is spent preparing one to shoulder greater responsibilities of Grahyastha i.e the Family life. After the worldly responsibilities are over & one comes of retirement age, he moves to the forest i.e the Banaprastha to lead an ascetic life of frugal means, preparing for the journey beyond life. Finally one becomes a Jati, as he renounces the world in the pursuit of search of the divine & the soul. In these four systems of life, the Guru, who plays the role of a mentor in the Brahmacharya Ashrama instills in his student the values of life & prepares him with a skill set to earn a righteous livelihood. The whole system resonated with one another in sync with Mother Nature & sustainable.

Indian Mythology consists of two grand epics i.e The Ramayana & the Mahabharata. In the

Mahabharata we find story of Dronacharya & Ekalabya. Dronacharya, who was the martial arts trainer of the Pandavas & Kauravas did not accept the request of Ekalabya, a brilliant boy from the tribal clan to accept him as a pupil. Not to be disheartened, Ekalabya, set out for the forest & started practicing archery with bow & arrows with the Idol of Dronacharya before him. His focused practice made him a great archer & in course of time when Dronacharya happened to meet him in the forest, Ekalabya who had accepted Dronacharya as his Guru paid the price of "Guru dakshina" in the form of his thumb of right hand as demanded by the latter. Thus was the greatness of a pupil & belongingness for the teacher.

In Mahabharata we also find the story of Karna, the great warrior who having been rejected by Dronacharya for being the son of a low caste charioteer sought the tutelage of Bhagaban Parasurama by professing himself to be a Brahmin by caste. But as the story goes, when Parasurama realized that Karna was not a Brahmin, but belonged to the warrior clan, cursed him to forget his teachings at the most crucial time of his life. This resulted in the turn of events in the Mahabharata war when Karna lost his life to

Arjuna's arrows in the battlefield. The relationship between the Teacher & the taught was of mutual admiration, respect & trust.

Lord Krishna spent his formative years with his best friend Sudama in the Ashrama of Guru Sandipani. In the Ashrama there was no feeling of high & low, rich & poor. All the students were considered equal as they lived the life of avid learners under the loving & caring guidance of the mentor.

In the Ramayana also we find glimpses of Teacher & student relationship when Lord Rama spent his tutelage years with his Guru, Sage Vasistha from whom he learnt the nuances of the scriptures & martial arts to prepare him for his princely duties & fought many wars to free the

world of demons.

The Guru often held the place of a father in the life of his wards & was also held in high esteem. The Gurukul was often situated far away from the luxurious life of the cities in the forest in the lap of nature. Even after the wards completed their studies & graduated to the family life, the Guru continued to play the role of philosopher & guide in one's life.

Today, in the present world context, these awe inspiring stories still hold relevance both for the teachers & the students. This relationship is unique & eternal & cannot become redundant with time.



"Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world."— Malala Yousafzai



Innate Teacher in Me

Dr. Nikita Ahya

My journey as a teacher began in the bustling corridors of a Delhi University college, fresh out of my Master's program and with a heart full of dreams. This phase of my life was not just about imparting knowledge; it was about finding myself, my self-esteem, and the power within. Teaching, for me, started as a challenge I hadn't anticipated, teaching students who were just a few years younger, in a language that wasn't my primary medium of instruction. Yet, this experience, brief as it was, became an essential element in building my confidence.

When Delhi's chaos started to weigh heavy on my soul, I returned to my hometown. This shift was more than just geographical; it was a transition into a realm where I started to craft moments, live them fully. Joining a high school to teach and coordinate the humanities stream was a significant step. This was a field often misjudged as 'easy' compared to science or commerce. I recall the amusing confusion of some, like the clerk in the Examination Cell who didn't realize that humanities encompassed multiple subjects, not just one.

The early days at the school were a mix of shock, surprise, and fun. Initially, I had just one student, making the experience feel more like a private

tuition than a formal classroom setting. But soon, the numbers grew, and I found myself amidst a vibrant group of young minds. Despite the management's skepticism about their academic performance, these students, in their own unique ways, excelled and made me proud.

Handling teenage students, especially those from affluent backgrounds, posed a unique set of challenges. They often came with a sense of entitlement, expecting affirmative responses to all their demands. As their teacher, I navigated these complex dynamics, trying to maintain a balance between the management's expectations and my students' needs. Even when I wasn't delivering content in the most perfect manner, I always encouraged my students to push their limits and found happiness within them.

Every day was a learning experience, both for my students and for me. I found myself embracing innovative teaching methods, like explaining fundamental rights through Bollywood songs, and learning about diverse cultures and interests from my students. This journey was not just about teaching; it was about discovering life's numerous facets through the eyes of my students.

My role as a teacher often extended beyond

academics. I found myself in the midst of teenage turmoil, witnessing my students grapple with infatuations, bad grades, and family disputes. These moments were emotionally taxing, yet they reinforced my belief in the transformative power of education and empathy.

As the years passed, I watched many batches of students graduate, each leaving an indelible mark on my journey as an educator. I introduced non-academic activities like Model United Nations and TED-Talks, finding joy in these additional responsibilities. Through all the challenges, be it personal financial strains or

witnessing the struggles of my students, the classroom remained my sanctuary, a place where all worries momentarily fade away.

Now, reflecting back, I realize I am an innate teacher. The role allowed me to be the person I always aspired to be, shaping lives and being shaped in return. Teaching, for me, has always been about fostering change, about not accepting the status quo, and about instilling a sense of patience and resilience. My journey as a teacher has been a testament to the profound impact educators have, not just on the minds they shape but also on the society they help build.



Good teachers know how to bring out the best in students."

– Charles Kuralt

KIIT Provides Jobs, Education to Bahanaga Train Tragedy Affected Families from Odisha

In a compassionate humanitarian gesture, the KIIT Deemed to be University has extended employment opportunities and provided free education to the family members of the deceased individuals in the Bahanaga train tragedy hailing from Odisha.

Dr. Achyuta Samanta, the Founder of KIIT and KISS, met the beneficiaries on 5th November 2023 and personally handed over the employment letters. Out of the beneficiaries, a total of 20 individuals have chosen employment opportunities, while two children from different families have opted for higher education at KIIT, where they are currently pursuing their studies. This support aims to assist the families of the victims and ensure a brighter future for their children.

The Bahanaga train accident, involving three trains, in Balasore District of Odisha on June 2 was the deadliest train crash in India in decades, resulting in the loss of 288 lives, including 39 individuals from Odisha. The timely rescue and relief efforts, spearheaded by the Government of Odisha under the leadership of Shri Naveen

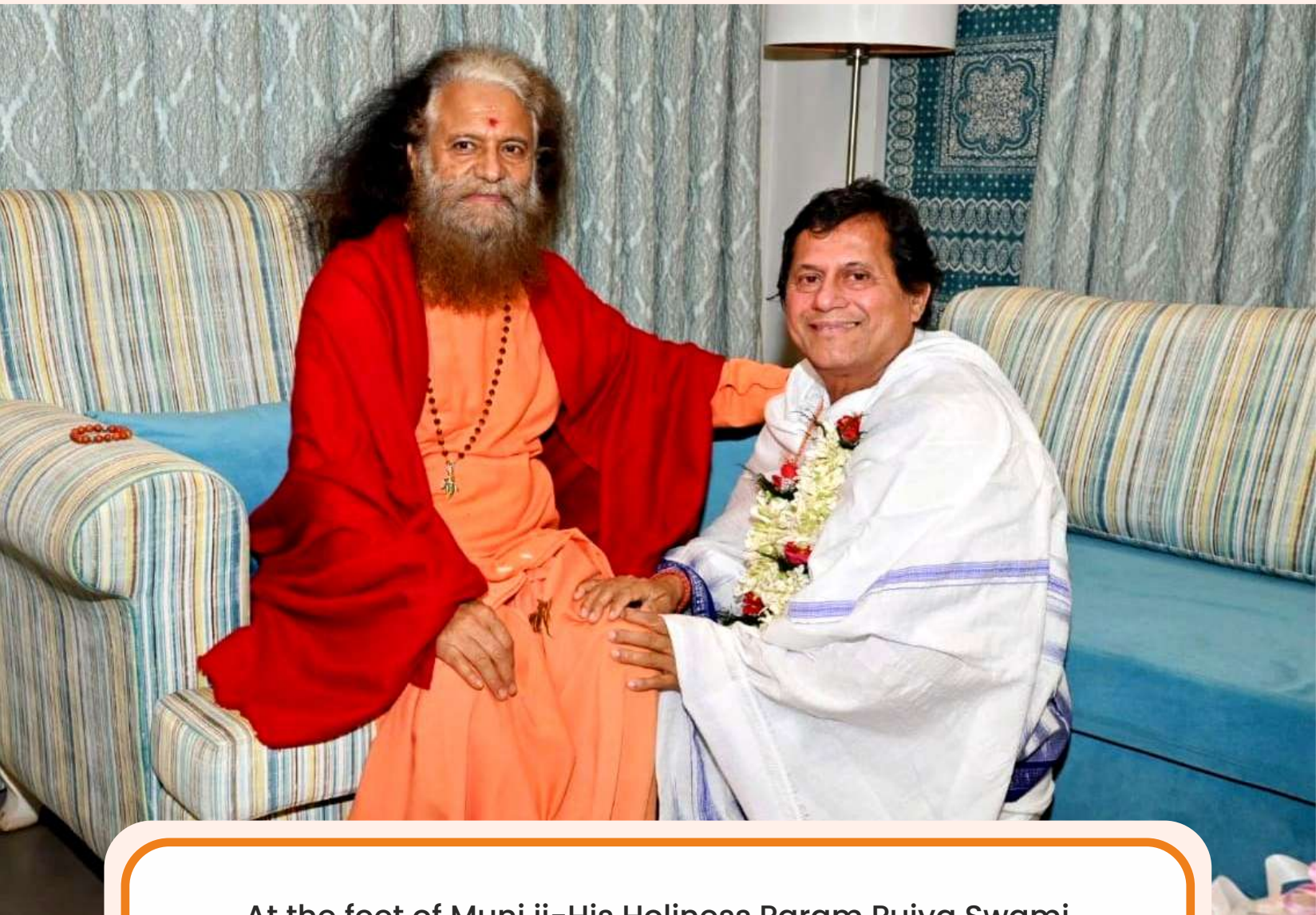
Patnaik, Hon'ble Chief Minister, saved the lives of thousands affected by the accident. The prompt response of local residents in rescuing the affected passengers received widespread praise.

Following the accident, the Founder had announced support for the victims' families. He had announced employment opportunities at KIIT and KISS for one member from each family of the deceased from Odisha, based on their eligibility. Additionally, free education was extended to their children at KIIT and KISS, starting from Standard 1 up to higher levels. The family members expressed their gratitude to Dr. Samanta for his support during this critical time.

KIIT has consistently stepped forward to provide humanitarian assistance during distressing events. During the COVID-19 pandemic as well, KIIT offered support to hundreds of students who had lost their parents, providing free education, offering jobs to family members of those affected by the pandemic, and aiding the general public through various means.



PANORAMA



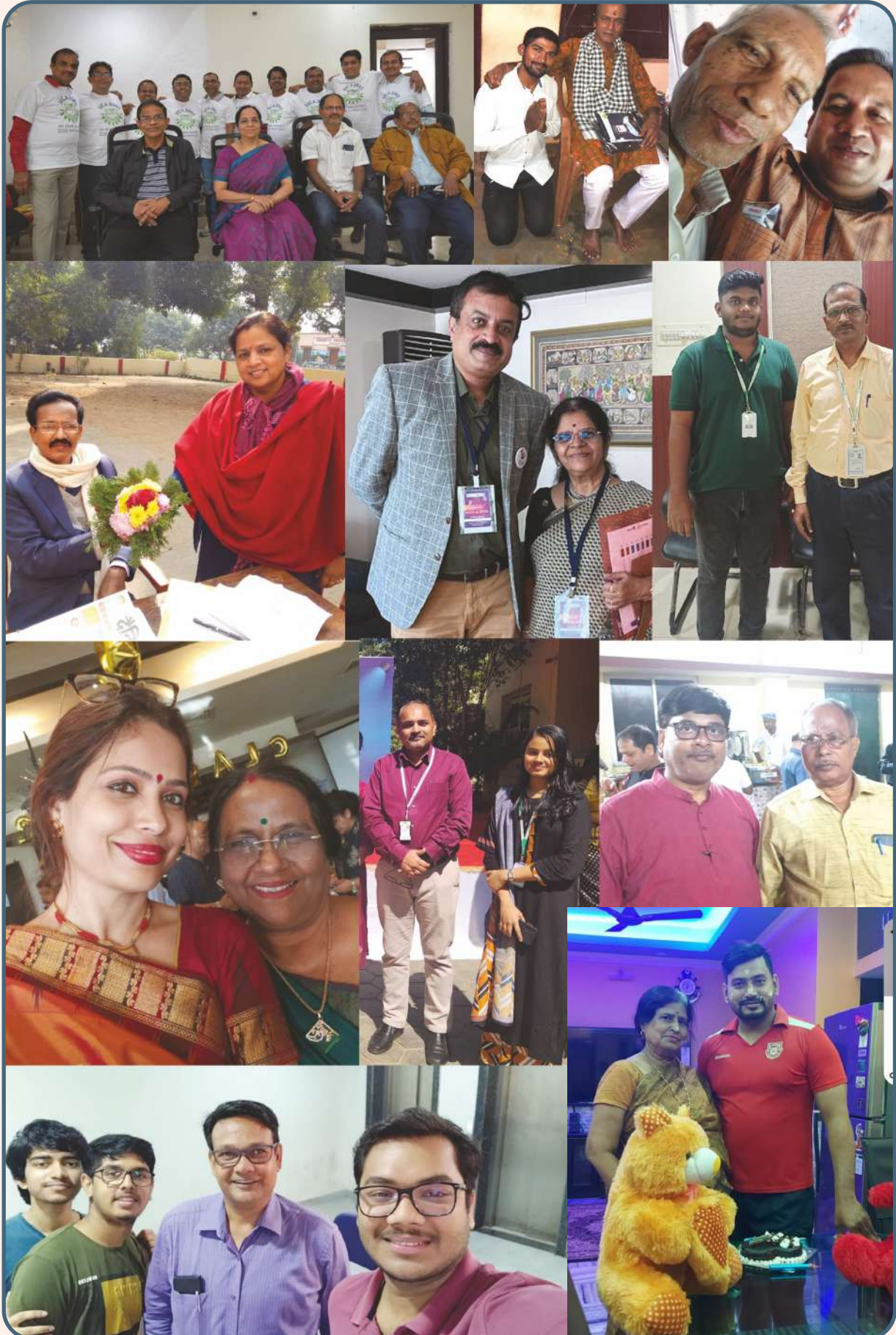
At the feet of Muni ji-His Holiness Param Puja Swami
Chidananda Saraswati Ji

Achyuta Samanta



Glimpses of the campaign

#ThankyouTeacher



#ThankyouTeacher



Principles of Art of Giving

Art of Giving is not limited to a single day or a particular way. The profundity of one's kindness and generosity can reverberate through eternity. The act of giving is not solely a function of material wealth, for the greatest gift one can offer is the tenderness of words, the warmth of companionship, or the selfless gift of one's time. One need not be affluent to partake in the Art of Giving. Indeed, the spirit of giving emanates from the depths of one's heart, with no ulterior motive or calculation. A life lived in the spirit of the Art of Giving is a life of fulfillment, purpose, and sacrifice. It is a life well lived, which generations will cherish.

I have learned that giving is not about how much we have, but rather about the intention behind our actions. When we give with a pure heart, even the smallest act of kindness can have a profound impact on those around us.

Prof. Achyuta Samanta

Founder- KIIT, KISS and Art of Giving



Prof. Achyuta Samanta is a visionary educationist and global humanitarian dedicated to transforming the lives of underprivileged people and communities through his social work in the field of education, tribal uplift, healthcare, rural development, women empowerment and sustainable development.



The act of giving is not solely a function of material wealth, for the greatest gift one can offer is the tenderness of words, the warmth of companionship, or the selfless gift of one's time. One need not be affluent to partake in the Art of Giving. Indeed, the spirit of giving emanates from the depths of one's heart, with no ulterior motive or calculation. A life lived in the spirit of the Art of Giving is a life of fulfillment, purpose, and sacrifice.

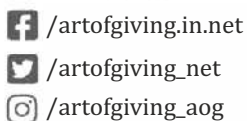
- Achyuta Samanta



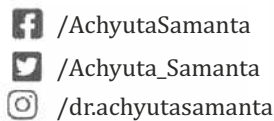
#ThankyouTeacher

Teacher! Repeat this word. Take a moment to relax and go back in time. Ever noticed how quickly we can recall special moments? Memories stay fresh because they're like bookmarks in our minds. We might not remember every teacher, but we surely remember the ones who made us feel important, heard, and cared for. Whether it's a kind line they said, a story they shared, or just how they acted. Remember, teachers aren't just in classrooms. Our parents and grandparents were our first teachers, showing us the right path. Even our friends teach us things. As time goes on, it teaches us too, like a wise friend. Books also teach, helping us learn. Experiences are some of the best teachers.

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